

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 4386

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PORG
SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: NONALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE
FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING, NEW DELHI, APRIL 6-11

REF: STATE 064158

1. DURING THE COURSE OF A LONG DISCUSSION OF US FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES ON MARCH 28, THE CHARGE TOOK UP THE NONALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY JAGAT MEHTA. HE EXPLAINED THAT WE DID NOT WISH TO INTRUDE ON A CONFERENCE IN WHICH WE WERE NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED, BUT WE FOUND THAT POSITIONS TAKEN AT NONALIGNED FORA HAD AN EFFECT ON DELIBERATIONS IN BODIES WHERE WE WERE REPRESENTED AND HAD IMPORTANT INTERESTS. THEREFORE, WE WISHED TO MAKE KNOWN OUR VIEWS ON CERTAIN ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO US. THE CHARGE DESCRIBED THE IMPROVEMENT IN ATMOSPHERE FOLLOWING THE COLOMBO SUMMIT AND SAID WE HOPED THESE TRENDS WOULD CONTINUE. HE THEN MADE THE POINTS LISTED UNDER PARAGRAPH 12, REFTEL.

2. MEHTA LISTENED CAREFULLY AND AFTER THE CHARGE'S PRESENTATION REMARKED THAT THE USG KNOWS THE INDIAN POSITIONS (I.E. ITS MODERATE STANDS ON KOREA AND PUERTO RICO, ETC.) THE US ALSO
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KNOWS OF THE NONALIGNED PRACTICE OF ADOPTING COLLECTIVE POSITIONS BY CONSENSUS RATHER THAN BY VOTE. RESOLUTIONS MAY BE ADOPTED, HE SAID, TO WHICH INDIA WILL BE A PARTY BUT MAY NOT FULLY SUBSCRIBE. MEHTA MENTIONED THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE CHARGE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO POINT OUT THAT WE HOPED ACTIONS WOULD NOT BE TAKEN WHICH WOULD MAKE POSITIONS ON A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT MORE RIGID. ON THE SUBJECT OF KOREA, MEHTA

SAID THAT NORTH KOREANS WERE SENDING A DELEGATION AND THAT IT WOULD NOT BE A SURPRISE TO HIM IF THEY SEEK ACCEPTANCE OF A RADICAL POSITION EVEN BEYOND THAT SET FORTH AT COLOMBO. HE CONSIDERED IT A SAFE GUESS THAT THEY WOULD HAVE THAT PURPOSE IN MIND. INDIA WOULD TRY TO MOVE THE CONFERENCE IN THE DIRECTION OF ITS OWN THINKING BUT, HE WARNED, THE CONSENSUS MAY NOT REPRESENT INDIA'S NATIONAL POSITION. THE CHARGE INTERRUPTED TO SAY THAT A WAY HAD BEEN FOUND AT COLOMBO TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM; MEHTA GOT THE POINT, MENTIONING THE PRACTICE OF EXPRESSING RESERVATIONS.

3. MEHTA'S RESPONSE WAS CAUTIOUS AS IT HAD BEEN WHEN WE TOOK UP SOME OF THE SAME ISSUES WITH HIM BEFORE THE COLOMBO CONFERENCE. FOLLOWING THAT PRESENTATION, INDIA'S POSITION AT COLOMBO HAD BEEN HELPFUL AND WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE IT WILL BE ANY DIFFERENT THIS YEAR. INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE WILL BE COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT ITS DELEGATION WILL BE LED BY A NEW AND INEXPERIENCED FOREIGN MINISTER. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST EXPOSURE OF THE NEW INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD. IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO OUR INTERESTS THAT THE NEW PRIME MINISTER HAS, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, INDICATED THAT INDIA INTENDS TO FOLLOW "PROPER" OR "GENUINE" NONALIGNMENT. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY REMARKED THAT THIS WAS A CHANGE IN NUANCE OF INDIAN POLICY WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER WAY FOR SOME TIME RATHER THAN A SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE BUT EVEN A CHANGE OF NUANCE COULD BE HELPFUL IN THE NACCFM. SCHNEIDER

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